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WOODROW WILSON

An Appreciation

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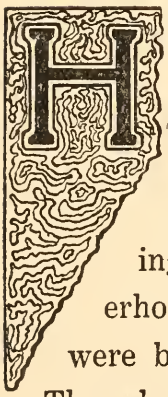
WOODROW WILSON

The Man

"He who ascends to mountain tops shall find
The highest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;
He who surpasses or subdues mankind
Must look down on the hate of those below."—Byron.



IS COUNTRY called him, and he answered, and has written his name imperishably on the altar of sacrifice and achievement—not in pride, but in truth. Unceasingly he labored for Universal Brotherhood and Peace, and his motives were beyond cavil; his art was Justice. The whole world hung upon the purity of his diction, the music of his lips, and the promise in his words. He ascended to heights beyond the mountain tops, and Envy passed him by. From an exalted place in the heart of the world, he flashed and shone like the North-

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ern Star, unshaked of motion. "Too proud to fight" (but not too proud to battle for the right when weak contend with strong), he verified the axiom that "rightly to be great is not to stir without great argument, but greatly to find quarrel in a straw when honor's at the stake." Great minds understood the meaning of his words; the envious were confounded and confused. He strove to redeem the implied promise of his country to mankind to be a foe to Oppression.

The stricken world appealed to his sense of justice. Great Britain, her back against the wall; France, bleeding at every pore; Belgium, a shambles; Italy, ploughed by the hoof and menaced with complete annihilation; America, bayed, bullied, insulted, challenged; her citizens outraged and murdered; these were the confusions worse confounded—these the accumulated depredations against virtue, decency, democracy and civilization—that touched revulsive chords in every humane breast and demanded immediate militant

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measures to dethrone tyranny and "make the world safe for democracy!"

When forbearance ceased to be a virtue, he spoke in clarion tones and struck in avalanche of power. Into the war of maddened nations he threw his manhood, his strength and his soul. To his call for men, millions of willing, fearless patriots responded with victorious shouts. The Argonne, Flanders Field, Belleau Wood, and St. Mihiel—(Oh, hearts that ceased to beat at Freedom's call! Oh, mute but hallowed heroes in a righteous cause!)—emblazoned be thy names forever on Fame's Immortal Arch! America bled, he groaned; but in the vista saw eternal babel vanquished, and he exulted!

He knew no law save Duty. He heard no voice save Service. And to these twin virtues he dedicated all he had, and gave of his prodigal treasures until his strength was bankrupt. He sought no adulation; he asked no recompense. He labored in the fierce light of a many-voiced Time, and placed the stamp of

his disapproval upon the secret machinations of a jealous Europe, demanding "open covenants openly arrived at." He hewed to the line, and many chips fell in unfriendly places. If ambition swayed him, it was the ambition of a patriot to achieve a patriot's duty—to keep America foremost in the galaxy of nations.

"Oh, ye, whose hour glass shifts its tranquil sands
In the unvexed silence of a student's cell;
Ye whose untempted hearts have never tossed
Upon the dark and stormy tides where life gives battle to the elements—and man
Wrestles with man for some slight plank whose weight
Will bear but one—while 'round the desperate wretch
The hungry billows roar—and the fierce Fate,
Like some huge monster, dim-seen thro' the surf,
Waits him who drops; ye safe and formal men,
Who write the deeds and with unfeverish hands
Weigh in nice scales the motives of the Great,
Ye cannot know what ye have never tried!"—Lytton.

Like a breath wafted from the deadly Upas tree came a poisoned whispering. Too great for men to speak the truth of, he was maligned and bitterly set upon. Health that had been robust suddenly gave way beneath the weight

of overexertion and the fierce onslaught of opposing factions. Weakened in body, but strong in the right; fighting an unequal battle against insidious propaganda and persistent foes, he holds fast his estate in patriotic endeavor, and manifests an unfaltering trust in all mankind. The future will not only vindicate his course, but place his name beside the heroic intellectual giants of the earth.

Time, in its resistless course, will furrow the brow of Youth, whiten his locks and sap his splendid strength; custom may change or revolution mar the beauteous face of Nature; nations, now supreme, may fall into decay and suffer dissolution; men may come, and men may go and most men be forgotten. These are eventualities and cataclysms the causation of which human intelligence can neither fathom nor understand; but, within the conception of the finite mind, unless it be the blotting out of every spark of Life upon our planet, nothing can suf-

fice to tarnish or efface the fame of this Magnificent American!

Nothing is here recorded in extenuation of his faults; nothing in flattery of his wonderful achievements. The outstanding facts of history confirm the greatness of his executive record; and, in the pride of our hearts, we hail him as a true exemplar of statesmanship.

Safeguarded by the Present and by Posterity, his reputation is established—inviolable and beyond the reach of the poisoned shafts of calumny. Centuries yet unborn will bear witness to his birthright as a Son of Earth, and pay just tribute to the merit of his faults! Today, a Man; tomorrow, an Immortal! I choose, therefore, to quote from Immortality the highest tribute ever paid Mortality and dedicate it to the world-war President of the United States—Woodrow Wilson:

> "His life was gentle, and the elements
> So mixed in him, that Nature might stand up
> And say to all the world, 'This was a MAN.'"
>
> —Joseph De Barthe

Washington, D. C.,
November 19, 1920

"God give us men. The time demands
Strong minds, great hearts, true faith and willing hands;
Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honor; men who will not lie;
Men who can stand before a demagogue
And dam his treacherous flatteries without winking;
Tall men, sun-crowned, who live above the fog
In public duty and in private thinking."—J. G. Holland.

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